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C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 012835

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/17/2014

TAGS: [EAIR](#) [SNAR](#) [CO](#)

SUBJECT: TAMPA AIRLINES: PROCEED WITH CAUTION

Classified By: Ambassador William B. Wood for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary. Post has no objection to Ex-Im Bank's financing of a Boeing 767-300F cargo aircraft for Tampa Airlines based on currently available information. Embassy recommends that Ex-Im proceed with caution, however, based on results of a recent meeting between DEA and Tampa Airlines and Tampa's subsequent cooperation. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Embassy officers have evaluated the progress of Tampa Airlines as a result of a November 10 meeting between Tampa Airlines' president, general counsel, U.S. lawyer and MartinAir Holland's lawyer and DEA and ECON officials. During that meeting, DEA Bogota outlined major concerns with Tampa Airlines, specifically Tampa Airline's noncompliance with Colombian and DEA law enforcement activities. Tampa's president, Fred Jacobsen, said he was unaware of this situation but adamantly stated he and Tampa Airlines would comply with any requirements DEA and the Colombian police have with Tampa Airlines. Jacobsen acknowledged that Tampa's executive management control had been disconnected from Tampa's airport ground control personnel and stated he will personally monitor ground control operations in the future so that meaningful improvements will be implemented immediately to yield positive results in security. DEA responded that although this new company position was encouraging, future action would be the final factor in determining meaningful results.

¶3. (C) Subsequent to the November 10 meeting, Tampa Airlines has made marked improvements in cooperating with the Colombian Anti-Narcotics police as well as with DEA Bogota. To improve ground control operations, Tampa Airlines has contracted an outside security firm to analyze its security operations in Cali in an effort to combat drug smuggling on Tampa airplanes.

¶4. (C) It appears that USG scrutiny, especially Ex-Im's decision to delay financing for Tampa, resulted in Tampa's new cooperative attitude. Although, at present, Tampa Airlines is willing to cooperate, Post recommends future dealings between USG agencies and Tampa Airlines take into account the continued level of cooperation Tampa Airlines is providing.

WOOD